



The Maryland Gazette



From Tuesday April 1, to Tuesday April 8, 1729.

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Mr. Park,



Have seen Capt. Hoxton's Epistle General, in your Paper, which he seems very desirous should pass without any Remarks. If the Subject Matter of that fine Piece, related only to the Captain, his Employer, and those that are dignified with the Title of Mr. Hyde's Friends, I would for my own Part, oblige the

Captain. But, as it concerns every Man in Maryland, either immediately, or consequentially, it would be an Offence against Society, not to take some Notice of it.

The first Paragraph is a heavy Complaint of some Means that have been used to render Mr. Hyde as disagreeable as possible to the People of this Province, by some Persons whom this worthy Captain of His, is pleased to call Calumniators.

Mr. Hyde has the largest Share of Consignments from this Province, of any Man that is concerned in the Tobacco Trade, which, of Course, gives him the Power of doing more Service or Prejudice to it, than any other Merchant. For, if he does any Thing amiss, others (who dare not transgress, were they not shewn the Way by a Man of Figure) will be too apt to follow such an Example, in Hopes of being justified by it; and to think themselves under no Obligation to promote the Interest of their Employers, but in Proportion as they observe it to be promoted by such as have the greatest Share of Business: So that not only his own Mismanagement is wholly, but also the Mismanagement of others, may partly be imputed to him. Hence it is, that the Effect of his Conduct, be it good or bad, reaches as well those that do not, as they that do consign their Tobacco to him, that his Management becomes of publick Concern; and the Subject of a publick Enquiry.

Were it otherwise, and that his Management could only affect such as think fit to correspond with him; it would be impertinent (in my humble Opinion) in any one else, to concern himself about it.

But since it is as I have already mentioned, the People here are in a fine Condition indeed, if any among them who feel the sad Effect of the Management in London; and are sensible of the Calamities it has brought upon their Country; are to be treated as Calumniators, or otherwise reviled and insulted by Mr. Hyde's Skippers, for endeavouring to represent Things, as it is the Interest of every individual Person in the Country, to be acquainted with, in a true Light.

If this be our Condition, the Question a Man ask'd, *Whether we thought ourselves freemen?* is less Insupportable than I thought it was; for we are, as Slaves to those that employ, and pay large Wages to.

I come now to the second Paragraph, wherein the Captain endeavours to acquit Mr. Hyde of being in the French Contract. Because he proposed to the Society, to have the Tobacco stored and valued by two Merchants to be appointed for that purpose.

Because the Merchants have certified that the Report of being so, was false and groundless.

That Proposal was Plausible indeed, but I suppose known to be impracticable, or at least attended with many and great Difficulties, when it was made. For I can't learn that it was so much as attempted to be put in Practice: Nor can I see that Mr. Hyde acted at all consistently with his own Proposal; when he refused (if Mr. Ridgley's Relation be true) even to

tell for what he had sold his Tobacco. For, the Proposal of viewing Tobacco must have been to prevent out being imposed on by the Merchants that we employ to sell it: And the Reason why the Merchants resolved that the Rates Tobacco were sold at, should not, as formerly, be kept a Secret, was to prevent the Buyers imposing on them.

The Proposal was not agreed to, but a Resolution was entered into, which, 'tis probable, might have been serviceable had it been kept; which it might very easily have been.

And I submit to the Judgment of any unbiassed Person, whether it can be thought that a Man was sincere, who proposed a Thing in its own Nature impracticable, or at least very difficult; and refused to comply with a Thing in its own Nature perfectly easy, and which was resolved on by the Society; and made a Rule of their Conduct? And whether Mr. Hyde did not manifest, by that Refusal, a greater Regard for the Buyers of Tobacco, than for the Proprietors?

Whether Mr. Hyde was or was not in a private Contract with the French Agent, to supply him with Tobacco at a low Price, cannot be known here. For, such a Contract is so very dishonest in its own Nature, that it is not to be supposed any one would be made privy to it, but such whose Interest it was to keep it an absolute Secret. A Man therefore, who transacts such an Affair, with the necessary Precaution, may safely enough challenge any one to convict him of it: And it is to little Purpose for People to declare they are suspicious of a Man whom they know they cannot detect if he really is guilty; especially, when perhaps a pretended Confidence of his Innocence may possibly induce him to avoid committing new, or repeating old Crimes. Whether the Merchants that gave Mr. Hyde the Certificate, had these Considerations, or whether the Certificate contain their real Sentiments, I know not: But, it is certain, that Actions are the best Evidence of a Man's Guilt or Innocence: And how Mr. Hyde's refusing a greater Price (if he did so) of Mr. Randolph, for his Tobacco, than he sold the same Tobacco for to the French Agent, can be reconciled with his Duty to his Employers, or even with his own Interest, unless he had some other Way to make up his own Loss, I cannot conceive; nor can I doubt the Fact being so; in regard Mr. Randolph (as Mr. Ridgley declares) tax'd him with it publicly. Such a Charge against a Man in considerable Business, could not but affect him, and it seems incredible to me, that such a one would tamely bear it, if he was innocent; or that his Silence, on such an Occasion, could be the Effect of his Modesty.

It is very certain, that Mr. Hyde is charged with having broke the Agreement made by the Merchants; and it is also certain, that if he deserves that Charge, he does the Regretment of every Man in Maryland. The Captain says, that when he came away, Mr. Hyde knew nothing of this Charge: Yet, being apprehensive that a Person who was so base as to invent the former Story (I suppose he means that of the French Contract) would not stick at any Thing; and being desirous to render his Friends the utmost Satisfaction, did What? Why he gave each of his Masters a Letter containing an Account of his Conduct, with Orders to communicate it. If this be true, the Letters are of a publick Nature: And why are they not published? If People have a worse Opinion of Mr. Hyde than he deserves, 'tis for Want of better Information. And why will not the Masters of his own Ship, undeceive them if they